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A WORD TO A YOUNG LADY,
ABOUT THE EIGHTH OF JANUARY BALL.

The Eighth of January Ball! Yes, the hall was lighted, with diamonds and eyes brighter than diamonds, they say. But the eighth of January ---what makes that the great dancing evening of the year? What ever happened on that day or evening to set all the fairy feet and fiddles in the country a-going after such a fashion? Yes, it is true, they say, that more than a thousand men in red-coats were killed before New Orleans one Eighth of January, by men with coats half black and half red. And every man of them that laid down in his blood and died with his eyes open in the hot sand, had some one on the other side of the ocean that loved him---a mother, a brother, or a sister just like you, it may be. Among the acres of dead and dying men that lay with ball and bayonet-holes through their breasts, there were hundreds of young men, scarcely twenty years of age. And they had danced too, in merry England, on many a merry evening, with England's fairest daughters. Young men they were of warm and generous hearts, who had been the light and life of many a social circle. And the last words that moved their pale, bloodless lips, were the names of loved ones in another land, who never danced after they heard what was done on the Eighth of January. And there is sorrow and silence in a thousand English homes at the thought of that day's doing. And you, and thousands like you, who would faint away to see a man's little finger cut off, can dance with a heart full of mirth on the anniversary of that day of blood! Come, think of the thing a moment. Suppose, when the Battle of New Orleans was over, and the fields were covered with mangled and bleeding men, writhing and wailing in their agony of pain, the ladies of the city had gone out in their ball dresses and danced to the music of fiddles around the dead and dying; reddening their white kids in the hot, human blood that smoked in the sand. Would it not have been celebrating the Eighth after your own way? Suppose that, next January, the floor of your dancing hall should be sanded with the bone-dust of the young Britons who fell on the Eighth, would your feet be the less light for it in the waltz, Miss Angelina? And if some noble-bearing youth from beyond the sea were by your side ---the son of one who fell on the celebrated Eighth with an American bayonet in his heart---would it check the merry humor of your eye, to tell him, half way down the dance, that the pulverised bones of his father whitened the floor? And if a hundred grey-haired English mothers, whose only sons were blown to pieces before the batteries at New Orleans, should come and sit down in a row by the wall, would it bate the spirit of the step, to tell them you were celebrating the slaughter of their loved ones, young maiden? And if the daughters of the young fathers who fell on the Eighth, should come, and with their white arms entwined with yours, should ask you the significance of the evening and of the music and dancing, would it start a daughter's sympathy in your heart to answer them truly, young woman?

E. B.